

ENGLAND AIR FORCE BASE

The former England Air Force Base is located in the extreme northern portion of Rapides Parish, Louisiana, approximately 5 miles west of the downtown portion of the City of Alexandria. In July 1991, the Baseline Realignment and Closure commission recommended closure of the base and the installation was closed in December 1992. The former base occupied 2,284 acres. The Air Force decided to dispose of the property by giving it to England Economic and Industrial Development District (EEIDD) for public airport use. The Air Force accomplished this through conveyance notice, after investigation and corrective action for the various sites on the property were successfully completed. The EEIDD is an independent political subdivision of the State of Louisiana created to take over and redevelop the former base. The England Airpark itself is a mixed-use development composed of about 2,200 acres, including the Alexandria International Airport, as well as over 300 housing units and 1.5 million square feet available for commercial use. Aviation, transportation, manufacturing, education, and health care activities are conducted on site. The City of Alexandria continues to use 1.48 acres as a small arms pistol range and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) uses 1.57 acres for support of airport activities and operation of their radar facility. Of the property included at England Airpark, about 968 acres are remaining to deed over to the EEIDD as new owner. However, EEIDD holds a base wide lease to all of the property, enabling it to develop, while awaiting deed of the remaining property.

Development of the former base began with the construction of the Alexandria Municipal Airport in 1942. With the onset of World War II, the Army Air Corps leased the facility from the City of Alexandria in 1942 and renamed it Alexandria Army Air Base. Until 1945, the facility was used as a B-17 and B-29 bomber combat crew training school. Early in 1946, the base reverted back to the City of Alexandria for use as a commercial airport. The base was later reactivated and assigned to the Tactical Air Command. In June 1955, the base was officially renamed England Air Force Base.

Since 1982, environmental studies have identified over 330 potential areas of concern on site, including landfills, above/underground storage tanks, fire training areas, oil/water separators, a sewage treatment pond, a low-level radiological disposal site, and suspected

warfare gas training burial sites. Of this number, some 59 solid waste management units (SWMUs) and five areas of concern were identified in a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Facility Assessment (RFA). Of those RFA sites, some 33 SWMUs and the areas of concern were included in the base Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendment (HSWA) corrective action permit issued in 1995.

In 1993, a Baseline Realignment and Closure Team was formed to direct and supervise the investigation and corrective action program developed for these numerous sites. Numerous RCRA Facility Investigations (RFIs), ecological/human health risk assessments, (soil/waste) removal actions, landfill cap remediation/replacement, and surveys of various kinds have occurred since then, with the result that, at present (October 2004), investigation remains only for about 11 sites (explosive ordinance clearance certifications) and a trichloroethylene (TCE) plume (impacting some 250 acres), located in the central portion of the former Base. Long-term groundwater monitoring remains for two other sites: SWMU 41, a sanitary waste disposal landfill, and the Petroleum Oil Lubricants (POL) Yard, where above ground storage of jet fuels still occurs. Both of the latter sites are located on or near the eastern boundary of the former base. Administrative closure of many of the SWMUs and AOCs in the permit remains.

The majority of investigations and corrective actions began prior to the implementation of the Louisiana Risk Evaluation/Corrective Action Program (RECAP). Nevertheless, because of the extensive level of effort expended, those activities are equivalent to the Management Option 3 tier of the RECAP program, the most site-specific resulting in a cautious approach to closing out a site. All investigations and corrective actions were completed using industrial standards, in keeping with expected future land use.

Remedy selection for the TCE plume will likely be Monitored Natural Attenuation, given the relatively low concentrations of chemical constituents in the groundwater. A base wide groundwater use restriction/notice has already been recorded in the Rapides Parish Courthouse, to protect the integrity of this proposed remedy. Long-term monitoring is also contemplated for the two other sites: SWMU 41 and the POL Yard. These proposed remedies are scheduled for recurring five-year reviews, which are intended to review the effectiveness of the proposed remedies to achieve the remedial goals. In the event that remedial goals are not being met, the remedy will be to re-evaluate and/or modify to ensure that the goals will be met.



Front view of Oak Wing Golf Club – Once property of former England Air Force Base



Restored World War II era B-17, stopped at England Air Park for refueling and maintenance